

February 9, 1948

Mrs. Florence Hayes, Editor
"OUTREACH"
156 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mrs. Hayes:

Herewith the article on Dr. Speer which I have called "~~Sare~~
Reminiscences of Robert E. Speer". The article runs about
2,000 words. I will have a photograph for you on Wednesday,
February 11.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

P.S. If you insert a note about the author of the article, I
would suggest: "W. Reginald Wheeler (p.) was for twenty-
eight years on the missionary and secretarial staff of the
Foreign Board. He is now Executive Secretary of Yale-in-China
Association."

W.R.W.

~~SOME~~ REMINISCENCES OF

ROBERT E. SPEER

by W. Reginald Wheeler

"Father entered into life last night at the Bryn Mawr Hospital." This telegram came to me on November 24th, 1947, from Margaret Speer.

My memory flashed back to a scene in the Chapel of The Hill School in 1904, when as a young student I first saw and heard Robert E. Speer. I remember clearly his text that day: "Watch Ye; Stand Fast in the Faith; Quit Ye like Men; be strong." As I thought back over the intervening 33 years, those words of St. Paul stand out as one of the revealing characteristics of this truly great Christian leader of his generation.

The January issue of "OUTREACH" carried a summary of Dr. Speer's life and work. His service as Secretary for 46 years of the Board of Foreign Missions, as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, ^{of America} as President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in North America, as author and speaker, are known to the Church in this country and overseas. At the memorial service held in the First Presbyterian Church in New York on December 16, 1947, Dr. John Mackay, President of the Foreign Board, told of meeting Dr. Speer in Edinburgh in 1910; Dr. Mackay said ^{then} he/thought that Dr. Speer was the greatest man he had ever known, and after subsequent years of friendship and fellowship, he had never revised that opinion. In the light of my own friendship and association with Dr. Speer extending from 1904 to 1947, and against the background

of acquaintance with other men in religious, business, political and military circles, in this country and abroad, I would second that statement of Dr. Mackay's, and would say that from the standpoint of force of personality, strength of will, ability of mind, and nobility of spirit, Dr. Speer was the greatest man I, too, have ever known. ~~Like the Apostle of old, he was truly "a man sent from God" and through Dr. Speer God has spoken to thousands in our own country and in other lands.~~[¶] Dr. Speer was an outstanding student at Princeton with one of the highest records in his academic work that has ever been made there. He was also a fine athlete, and played in the line on the Princeton University Football Team. His robust strength served him well throughout his life. He drove himself hard in his work, and in his travels, in his addresses, in his conferences, he accomplished what men of lesser capacity and strength could not have carried through. His will power and endurance of hardship were conspicuous on his first trip to Persia and the Near East in the early 1890's when he was struck down by typhoid fever, but kept on his journey before giving up much longer than men of less strength could have done, and was shown again in his trip again to Persia (now Iran) with Russell Carter, Treasurer of the Board, when in mid-winter they travelled in an open horse-drawn equipage night and day over the difficult roads of the early 1920's.

I remember his contributions at a conference in San Anselmo, California, in 1939, when he was 72 years of age. He had flown out on a plane the night before, but spoke with his customary clarity and vigor the following evening with no hint of his physical exertion and strain of the all-night aerial journey from the Atlantic Coast.

In 1945, when 78 years of age, he made the train trip to California and flew back to New York. He continued in his public addresses until the month of his death. In a true sense, "We shall not see his like again."

I have vivid and grateful memories of his influence and service in the Foreign Mission cause. I remember the Student Volunteer Convention of 1906 at Nashville, Tennessee, where the Olympian figures of Dr. John R. Mott, as Chairman, and Dr. Speer, as the closing speaker, enriched and dominated the program. / ^{I remember} the Student Volunteer Convention of 1910 at Rochester, New York, at which Dr. Speer spoke so eloquently and powerfully on his recent trip to South America. He had a severe cold which affected his voice, but by an obvious power of will, he drove himself through the address and held the audience as always, as he piled up the comparative statistics and the cumulative appeal and need of our sister republics to the South, closing with a powerful illustration of a man who had fallen overboard from the steamer on the Magdalena River in Colombia, (I have been on that lonely river) calling as he did for help: "Oh Hermanos! Oh brother!"; but "the night was dark, the river was swift, and he was gone." I remember the Congress on Christian work in South America, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1925, which, as ~~Secretary of the Foreign Board for Latin America, I attended with~~ Dr. Speer, ^{attended} as Chairman of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. I remember his self-effacing role there; how, rightly, Dr. Erasmo Braga, a most able Brazilian, presided over that trilingual conference, with grace and skill and how Dr. Speer sat below

the platform, but in attendance at every session with vigilant and helpful attention to all that was being said and done; and in the evening, as Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, met with that Committee long hours to keep the Congress running smoothly and to complete its work. And I remember his message to the missionaries in the fall of 1915 in China, when he spoke to us of our missionary duty, not to be "statesmen" but to be "found faithful"; and when later he spoke of the essentials of missionary service as being not brilliance or conspicuous qualities of minds and hearts that the world so often applauds, but as being "love and patience."

Many a man has had his life decisions clarified or altered by a letter or a spoken word from Dr. Speer. He influenced men in the deepest and most pervasive way, not merely by what he wrote or said, but most truly by what he was.

Dr. Speer was an omniverous reader, and poured out in his books and addresses the rich stream of that which he had read. He himself, in the midst of the pressure of all his other engagements, wrote and edited 37 books. The titles of those books are significant. In his student days, "Things That Make a Man"; "The Principles of Jesus"; and later, "Young Men Who Overcame"; "The Finality of Jesus Christ"; "What Jesus Means To Me"; "Jesus and Our Human Problems"; and "Five Minutes a Day", a book of devotional readings which Dr. Speer had prepared for his own use and then later made available through the urgent requests of a publisher, to a wider public. His writings illustrated a remark he once made that reading the Bible "fertilized" the mind. In a letter he wrote in the middle of February he said he had read 36 books (and only two detective stories among them) since Christmas.

Dr. Speer was as truly modest as he was ^{truly}/great. Seven of the books he wrote were biographies. His own service with the Foreign Board spanned nearly half a century of his work, and if included with that of his predecessor, Dr. John Lowrie, ^{covered}/nearly a century. His letters and addresses carried inspiration and guidance to thousands in this country and abroad. A biography of him, or better an auto-biography by him, would gather up that record in a personal and enduring fashion, and would be a source of strength and help through the years. Every argument that led him to write the biography of the seven individuals that appeared over his own name applied even more forcefully to the writing of his own biography or his auto-biography. Several times I spoke to him about the writing of such a book, and urged that it be done; if he would not wish to do it, I asked for that privilege. His replies were characteristically modest and humorous and revealed his sense of humor which many people did not realize was such a true part of his make-up. After one of my requests that he agree to his biography being written he wrote: "Nix on the biography. Merely say the cuss lived, he worked, he died; there are others coming along." And again, "If anyone tries to write a biography of me, or to get up a memorial for me, I will come back from the abode of the blessed, where I trust I will be, and get out of my grave a good-sized thighbone, and chastise the miscreant." We honor Dr. Speer for his genuine modesty that led him also to decline the invitation to attend a dinner to be given in his honor by the Foreign Board on his 80th birthday. But Dr. Speer's life and work belong to the Church and to the ages, and that biography, "The Life and Letters of Robert E. Speer", should and will be written, and will be a source of blessing to many

No account of Dr. Speer's life and service would be complete without reference to the unfailing support and inspiration given by Mrs. Speer. I quoted once in Dr. Speer's hearing a statement by a President of a theological seminary that "nine-tenths of a man's success or failure is due to his wife." Dr. Speer amended that by saying that "ninety nine hundredths of a man's success is due to his wife, and only one one hundredth of his failure." Regardless of the mathematical formula, we know what a true helpmate and partner Mrs. Speer was in Dr. Speer's work and how for many years she carried in addition the heavy load of responsibility for direction of the work of the Young Women's Christian Association overseas.

people in this country and beyond the seas.

One of the last messages from his eloquent pen to the Church and to the Foreign Mission body of the Church, is contained in the chapter he wrote for the Decennial History of the Foreign Board, now in manuscript, to be published this year, by the Board, under the title "The Crisis Decade". This volume will cover the decade from 1936 to 1946, with a supplementary year extending to 1947 and will be a successor to the monumental Centennial History "One Hundred Years", by Dr. Arthur J. Brown. The book, "The Crisis Decade", I had the privilege of editing for the Foreign Board, and it was a joy and inspiration to include in it as its final chapter one written by Dr. Speer on "The Present Situation".

Let me quote the concluding paragraphs of that chapter.

"Let me say only a concluding word about the real nature of this life that we are trying to live and this work that we are seeking to do. It is a conflict in which we are engaged, a conflict ever changing and unchanging. We are passing beyond the easy conception of the last generation or two with regard to the automatic self progression of humanity. As our friend, Dr. Adolph Keller, wrote from Geneva, as he surveyed the European scene; 'we are coming back to the first Christian conception of the world. The world is not plastic material to be easily molded by Christian influence. There is a hostile demonic element. The Church has to fight stubbornly against principality and powers for its faith and liberty, for the conversion of peoples and the spread of the gospel.'

"This was Paul's view. 'For we wrestle', said he, 'not against flesh and blood, but against principality, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in

high places'. If any of us have lived such placid lives that we do not realize this, if we still think life is a bright and happy unfolding of its own latent nature and possibilities of good, I hope we may be spared those deep tragedies through which others of us have had to pass which have taught us the truth of Paul's interpretation.

"We do believe, as our hymn declares: "

'God is working his purpose out
As year succeeds to year:

God is working his purpose out
And the time is drawing near;

Nearer, nearer draws the time,
The time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God,
As the waters cover the sea.'

"We believe this. If Paul could believe it and declare it in his letter to the Philippian Christians written from jail, from discouragement, from loneliness, from the treachery of fellow-Christians surely we can believe it and declare it today.

"But God's purpose will be accomplished only at the end of a great struggle; a struggle that cost the life of the Son of God, a struggle that is calling today for everything that is within us, that is demanding of us more than all that Jawaharlal Nehru is giving to his nationalism, all that Edward Wilson gave to Antarctic Exploration, that David Livingstone gave to those dark journeys which lifted the somber fringes of the night and let light in upon Africa, all that hundreds of thousands of our young men and the young men of other nations gave with full devotion in the dark and tragic years just behind us; all that Jesus asked and is asking still: 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.' This is the summons that is unchanged and unchanging. We consider the times, as Ignatius bade, but we look to Him, who is above time."

July 7, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Thank you for your letter of July 4, which came yesterday. I knew that you had helped in setting up the work of Yale-in-China, and I was interested to learn that at one time Yale considered taking over Hangchow.

It is a real wrench to leave the work of the Board after twenty-nine years here, but there is no place open. The work of Yale-in-China is the nearest to the service in which I have been engaged ever since I left graduate school. The work will not be easy, as China's future is uncertain and dangerous, and this situation affects the giving from the Yale constituency which is motivated more by loyalty to Yale and to general interest in humanitarian service overseas than it is by the deep Christian motives which underlie the work of our church abroad; but it is a good battle to be in, and we will do our best.

I may be in Princeton next week to pick up Dr. Mackay's Introduction to the Decennial History, and will hope to have a glimpse of you there.

My love to Mrs. Speer and to your family.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

P. S. In looking over the manuscript, "The Crisis Decade," I think your chapter is the best in the book. It supplies a fine conclusion for the History, and I am certainly happy to have it in the book. W.R.W.

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

W. R. W.

JUL 7 1947

Dear Rex

I am back from a fortnight of service with Pennsylvania
Zoo and the Summer Institute at Western Seminary and go with
plus visit to the Princeton Institute for studies in the Book of
Acts.

Your good letter of Jan 18 was waiting when I returned.
I am very glad to hear of your new work with you in China
of which I have known intimately ever since its inception.
The many other possibilities are considered yours taking over

Harvard.

But I am sorry you are not kept with the Board.

I shall look forward with interest to seeing the

Annual Report.

With love to Connie

Yours affectionately

Howard Green

July 1947

June 18, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Thank you for your check for the World Almanac. I ordered a copy for myself at the same time I ordered your copy. It took the World Telegram office over a week to send on the book, but it arrived finally. I trust you have received your copy by this time. Let me know if it has not arrived, and I will jog up the World Telegram Office.

I want to tell you about my new job. As you know, I returned to the Board on a one-year appointment only with the assignment to write the Decennial History of the Board. This action meant I had to find another job after July 7, 1947.

When I was separated from army service last spring, Dr. Latourette asked if I would be available for the Yale-in-China secretaryship. I told him I thought my first duty was to the Board, and also at my age, I questioned if I had the strength and energy to do the work as it should be done. As you know, I did that type of service in earlier years for Hangchow College, for Yenching, and for Nanking.

Half a dozen other jobs appeared on the horizon during this past year. I waited until after the annual meeting of the Board, June 10, 1947, before making any decision. Yale-in-China work is the nearest to service in China that has appeared, and after the Board meeting, June 10, 1947, I told the Yale group I would take that work if they still wished me to do it. The appointment was made June 15, 1947. I have the Decennial History to complete, so I will not start work in New Haven until after Labor Day.

There is some talk of trying to relate Yale-in-China with university service either at Yenching or Nanking, preferably Nanking. This would be an interesting development. Dean Weigle is especially interested in trying to hook up with the graduate work at the Nanking Seminary and with the University of Nanking. As yet, Yale University is not ready to move on this question. Meanwhile, the relationship to Hua Chung College will be maintained.

The Yale work in China was started chiefly by Congregationalists, but the Board of Trustees had developed quite a Presbyterian aspect. Dr. Coffin is the new President of the Board; Henry R. Luce is Chairman of the Committee that is trying to raise \$400,000 for rebuilding and restoration at Changsha; Dr. Lobenstein, Dr. Francis Hutchins, and Mr. Arthur B. Dayton of Minneapolis, and Dr. Hume, an elder in the Madison Avenue Church, are Trustees. Dr. Coffin, Harry Luce and I will have to be chiefly responsible for the campaign. This is a good Presbyterian trio, and the work will be interesting and worth while, but, as you know, my first love is our own Presbyterian Board work, and, of course, I would want to do this first if there were an opportunity here.

Dr. Robert E. Speer

-3-

June 18, 1947

I am enclosing a copy of the List of Contents of the Decennial History, which is subject to change before we go to press. As you can see, this book is an editorial job rather than one of single authorship.

Connie joins me in love to you and to Mrs. Speer.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

Enclosure

May 29, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer: (*h. filed under "N. Y. World Telegram"*)

Your card asking for a copy of the World Almanac for 1947 came yesterday.

The New York World Telegram publishes this Almanac, and I have ordered a copy to be sent to you. I have forwarded the check, so there will be no delay in sending the Almanac to you. The cost is \$1.85.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

"ROCKLEDGE," LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Dear Rex

Can you get me a copy of the "Green" Almanac
for 1947 if it is still published? And let me know the
cost. They are on sale at good news stands.

Ever affectionately

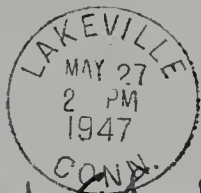
W.R.W.

MAY 28 1947

Roxana E. Speer

May 28, 47

1.75
2.70



Mr. Rev. Co. Reginald Charles LTD

156 7th Ave.

New York 10

Reg.

May 14, 1947

Dictated May 13, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Connie and I were at The Hill for the Alumni meeting. The beautiful memorial windows for Mr. Rolfe were dedicated Saturday evening in an impressive service. I am enclosing a program.

There was a large turn-out of Alumni - over 200 in number - and it is always a joy and an inspiration to return to the school. We missed Mrs. John and Mr. Rolfe, both of whom had died since my last visit to The Hill. Mike Sweeney is the only one still living of the great quartet that were responsible for leadership at the school for so many years.

He sent a telegram, and the Alumni voted to reply by wire, telling of their affectionate remembrance and of their deep gratitude to him for all he had done for The Hill since he first came there in 1895. Mike is pretty snaky, and I think it is doubtful how long he will be with us.

Dr. and Mrs. Lester came for the afternoon and brought fresh word of Billy and Betty, and your three fine grandchildren. As the Chinese would say, you have great happiness in them, and we are glad there will be another boy to bear the great name of Speer.

Last night at the China Colleges dinner, Connie and I had a glimpse of Marnie and of Holly, and we were glad indeed to see them again.

I remember so well when I first heard you speak at The Hill in the fall or winter of 1904. You were thirty-seven years old then. I remember the text of the sermon you preached on "Watch Ye; Stand Fast in the Faith; Quit Ye Like Men; Be Strong." Those words are chiseled over the archway of the northern chancel of the alumni chapel and strike the key note of the enduring message of The Hill at its best and also of your character and service. For both I am truly grateful.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

Enclosure

April 29, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Thank you for sending the two copies of your book, "The Christian Man, the Church, and the War."

Mr. Howard Vail, our Legal Counselor, who was a Major in the Air Corps and was a graduate of Princeton and took his law course at Yale, wanted especially to have a copy of this book, and I gave it to him with your compliments. The other one is going to Frank Price, who was recently here in New York and was discussing this problem of the Christian's attitude toward war.

Yesterday in the Fleming Revell Book Store, I came upon a book called "Across the Line" by the widow of Albert Terhune. This book contains a number of purported messages from the other world, but it has more of a Christian view than the other books I have seen on this subject. I do not know how much truth there is in these messages or how much is subjective, but I thought you and Mrs. Speer might be interested in the book, and I am sending it in return for the two copies of the book you sent me.

I was not satisfied with my letter to you about our financial situation. I started to write an explanation and then I realized that this would probably hurt Mr. Steele's feelings, so I destroyed it. The Restoration Fund is going very well, but that is chiefly for capital purposes, and I think the Board, as far as its current budget is concerned, is in for some really tough sledding. I would like to write more, but I do not think that I should.

Our love to you and Mrs. Speer.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Cpl. M. "47"
W. R. W.

APR 24 1947

Dear Rex,

I have a few copies of "The Christian Man, the Church and the War"

and am glad to send you two. There is no charge for these.

I hear from Officer Goodrich now and then. He greatly appreciates your kindness. Give him my warm regard and tell him that the last time I passed his post I looked for him but he was off duty.

Very,

Thank you for the report of Dr. Brown's late speech. Dr. Coffin was

a fine speaker on missions at a senior church service here last

Sunday evening.

Go to Hingham - enough.

Ever affectionately

Robert Coffin

April 14, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Thank you for sending me the autographed copy of "The Fellowship of the Spirit," which you had prepared for the Federal Council of Churches, and for the beautiful prayer by St. Francis of Assisi that came today. Connie and I will be glad to make use of the readings contained in the pamphlet for use from Easter to Pentecost, 1947.

I see Officer Hutchins frequently, and the other day he asked me to send to you his best wishes and to tell you that he was using in his devotions your book, "Five Minutes a Day." He said he was deriving help from it even though he is a Methodist. I also received your Federal Council booklet.

He reported that he had been laid up for a couple of weeks after a fainting spell in his home, but he was now on the job again despite his seventy years. I like to joke with him and tell him that I have received complaints that the traffic is not moving fast enough, and he always comes back by saying that he can direct traffic as well as, if not better than, any of the younger officers who have recently come on the force.

I have had two requests for your little book published by Macmillan, on the individual, the church, and the war. I went to Macmillan to try to buy a copy, but was told it was out of print and was referred to you. Do you have two copies available? These will be paid for if you care to send them.

We are in the last stages of the reports on the fiscal year. The Treasurer's forecast at the last Board meeting a month ago was a deficit of between \$100,000 and \$300,000 on the operations of the year. It is not possible yet to make a more definite guess though the final figure looks like it might be about half-way between the two estimates.

I hope that Easter Day at Lakeville was as beautiful as the Easter Sunday here. Pete was at home, and he and Connie and I went to church together with a Yale friend of Pete's, and it was a joy to share the Easter message of the truth and blessing of the resurrection and eternal life in Christ.

Connie joins me in love to you and to Mrs. Speer.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

Dr. Robert E. Spear

-2-

April 17, 1947

P. S. I have held this letter until I could add a report on the finances of the Board for the present fiscal year.

The books are not in final balance, and the auditors have not completed their report, but this morning Mr. Steele told us the deficit would be \$322,943.06.

Mr. Steele said that their estimates of receipts were quite accurate except in the gifts from living donors, which were below the amount expected. The Board voted to carry the deficit and approve the budget for the next fiscal year, which ends December 31, 1947.

I think all of the staff of the Board have worked very hard. They have done the best they could. I am not a member of the Council, so I cannot speak with any first-hand knowledge, and I think it is right under the circumstances that I do not consent.

On the 15th a dinner was given for Dr. and Mrs. Coffin, who had returned from the Cook Lectureship. Members of the Board and Council and other friends of the work were invited, and Dr. and Mrs. Coffin made splendid talks. Dr. Brown was present and spoke extemporaneously, and we wished for you.

Dr. Brown has sent in a summary of his remarks to be published in the Clerical Staff Bulletin, which goes to press about the middle of May. The Editor of the Bulletin would like very much to have a few words from you as the other Secretary Emeritus, if you would have time to send them on. I am enclosing a copy of Dr. Brown's talk.

A statement made by E. S. Martin, when he was writing the editorials for the former "Life" magazine, about W. J. Bryan as a liar, I think, to Mr. Wallace. Mr. Martin wrote: "This government was founded and built up by men of loose morals and sound brains. Mr. Bryan is a man of sound morals and a loose brain. If Billy only had had a bean on his, what a man he would have been!"

With love to you and Mrs. Spear in which Connie joins, I am

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

Enclosure

CC: Dr. Lohr
Dr. Scheil
Mr. Steele

Recd 17 Feb 47

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Feb. 15. 47

My dear Rex

It was good to get your letter of the 7th telling
of your two experiences of the nearness of that com-
pany to whom the writer of Shadow's report, the sur-
rounding objects. I too believe that they are near.
Col President Eliot discovered this on his death-
bed as his biographer tells.

I am glad you got out and back safely on
your air trip. I don't care for flying. It isn't com-
fortable and no seasickness. The only gain is in
time saving. and there are questions about that.

All is well with us here and we could not
be happier. With much love to Connie

Your affectionately

Robert E. Evans.

February 7, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

You have been my "Father Confessor" since I have been related to the foreign mission enterprise, and I wanted to share with you two recent experiences which I presumed might be called "mystical" and that are perhaps within the realm of the "Communion of the Saints."

Several Sundays ago Connie and I attended the morning service at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, of which Dr. Bonnell is Pastor. The church was full, including the balconies. It was a morning for Communion, and Dr. Bonnell conducted his service with his usual sincerity and sympathy. As we partook of the sacred elements, some of the old hymns were softly played.

I had been battling with some real decisions which had troubled me. You had touched on this realm in your tribute to George Irving in referring to temptations in the realm of imagination. I had a decision before me which was a real test, and I remember finally settling that decision and heaving away the imaginations with much the same type of effort as you use when you ~~were~~ finishing a close race or driving an opposing lineman out of the play. As I did so, I had the most beautiful and radiant sense of the presence of my father and mother, who suddenly seemed to be in the pew with Connie and me as we worshipped. Often we had been together in the Communion service in the little church at Endeavor, Pennsylvania, in our family pew there, in which I was ordained and where I conducted the Communion service before we sailed for China in 1915.

Their presence brought a feeling of great joy and comfort, and I felt anew a little more of the reality of the verse in the New Testament which told of Christ's temptation, the departing of the devil, and the coming of the angels to minister to Him.

As you wrote in your chapter for the Decennial History, I believe that there are demonic spirits, forces of evil in the world that have to be continually resisted and overcome, and this was an instance when the guardian angels brought help and peace.

I flew out to California to try to help Sandy in his effort to enter college there, and also in some of the problems he had. I also went up to our lumber office in Berkeley and flew down from San Francisco on the way to Los Angeles.

The weather was a bit thick; the pilot could not get into the Los Angeles Airport but landed us in Long Beach instead. We flew out over the ocean as we went

February 7, 1947

farther south; the sun, which had been shining brightly, as it does in California, had gone down, and I thought of the line in Henry V: "The gaudy, blabbing and remorseful day is crept into the bosom of the sea."

The sunset glow held for a long time on the horizon with a pale gold that seemed reflected from the barriers of Heaven. It was then that we flew over the dark waters, which were below, with no lights at all except one from a single ship which seemed lonely and far from home. I always feel a bit lonesome when I am on the ocean or flying over it.

It was rough, and the clouds hid the sky and the stars. Then the twinkling lights along the shore began to appear in a beautiful cluster at Santa Barbara. The clouds disappeared. A crescent moon came out, and the stars shone steadily above us in the clear California sky. Mother and my twin brother and I loved the drive from Pasadena to Santa Barbara, and I had vivid memories of our trips there when I was home on furlough from China when Mother lived in Pasadena. It seemed when we flew along in this calm celestial light that Mother and Jimmy were in the plane with me, and again this sense of communion with the unseen brought comfort and joy.

I suppose the sceptics would assume that these two experiences were purely subjective and illusory, but I cannot help feeling that our loved ones in the other world are often much nearer to us than we believe, and I know you have spoken of your own sense of communion with Elliott and other loved ones in the other world; so I wanted to send along this record of these two experiences to you and Mrs. Speer.

I came back from Los Angeles to New York in nine hours and fifty-two minutes' flying time, with two stops: one at Dallas and one at Washington, and a total elapsed time of about eleven hours. We had a hundred-mile tail wind part of the way, according to the pilot. I was in a DC-4 of the American Airline. The Constellations of the T.W.A. make even better time, but two of those flights on which I had a seat were canceled, and I came back by the same line as I went out.

In our work on the Decennial History, we have copied about 30,000 words but have a total of approximately 100,000 to do.

With love and best wishes from all of your friends to you and Mrs. Speer, I am

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

For Andy

Pat to N R. Which

February 7, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

You have been my "Father Confessor" since I have been related to the foreign mission enterprise, and I wanted to share with you two recent experiences which I presume might be called "mystical" and that are perhaps within the realm of the "Communion of the Saints."

Several Sundays ago Connie and I attended the morning service at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, of which Dr. Bonnell is Pastor. The church was full, including the balconies. It was a morning for Communion, and Dr. Bonnell conducted his service with his usual sincerity and sympathy. As we partook of the sacred elements, some of the old hymns were softly played.

I had been battling with some real decisions which had troubled me. You had touched on this realm in your tribute to George Irving in referring to temptations in the realm of imagination. I had a decision before me which was a real test, and I remember finally settling that decision and heaving away the imaginations with much the same type of effort as you use when you are finishing a close race or driving an opposing lineman out of the play. As I did so, I had the most beautiful and radiant sense of the presence of my father and mother, who suddenly seemed to be in the pew with Connie and me as we worshipped. Often we had been together in the Communion service in the little church at Endeavor, Pennsylvania, in our family pew there, in which I was ordained and where I conducted the Communion service before we sailed for China in 1915.

Their presence brought a feeling of great joy and comfort, and I felt anew a little more of the reality of the verse in the New Testament which told of Christ's temptation, the departing of the devil, and the coming of the angels to minister to Him.

As you wrote in your chapter for the Decennial History, I believe that there are demonic spirits, forces of evil in the world, that have to be continually resisted and overcome, and this was an instance when the guardian angels brought help and peace.

I flew out to California to try to help Sandy in his effort to enter college there, and also in some of the problems he had. I also went up to our lumber office in Berkeley and flew down from San Francisco on the way to Los Angeles.

The weather was a bit thick; the pilot could not get into the Los Angeles Airport but landed us in Long Beach instead. We flew out over the ocean as we went

February 7, 1947

farther south; the sun, which had been shining brightly, as it does in California, had gone down, and I thought of the line in Henry V: "The gaudy, blabbing and remorseful day is crept into the bosom of the sea."

The sunset glow held for a long time on the horizon with a pale gold that seemed reflected from the barriers of Heaven. It was then that we flew over the dark waters, which were below, with no lights at all except one from a single ship which seemed lonely and far from home. I always feel a bit lonesome when I am on the ocean or flying over it.

It was rough, and the clouds hid the sky and the stars. Then the twinkling lights along the shore began to appear in a beautiful cluster at Santa Barbara. The clouds disappeared. A crescent moon came out, and the stars shone steadily above us in the clear California sky. Mother and my twin brother and I loved the drive from Pasadena to Santa Barbara, and I had vivid memories of our trips there when I was home on furlough from China when Mother lived in Pasadena. It seemed when we flew along in this calm celestial light that Mother and Jimmy were in the plane with me, and again this sense of communion with the unseen brought comfort and joy.

I suppose the sceptics would assume that these two experiences were purely subjective and illusory, but I cannot help feeling that our loved ones in the other world are often much nearer to us than we believe, and I know you have spoken of your own sense of communion with Elliott and other loved ones in the other world; so I wanted to send along this record of these two experiences to you and Mrs. Speer.

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In our work on the Decennial History, we have copied about 30,000 words but have a total of approximately 100,000 to do.

With love and best wishes from all of your friends to you and Mrs. Speer, I am

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Jan 15, '47

My dear Rev.

I am glad that Connie approves the article which I have revised
in accord with your suggestions and return herewith.

I don't have at hand the date of the Round Table Conference or the
Chicago Training Register. I could find these in my papers in the Green Room
but I can't go down there tonight and this is the only time this week
I am at home. I returned from a three day "preaching mission" in
Salem, Va. this noon and leave home tomorrow morning for a trip to
Connecticut to speak at the Kossuth Temple.

Ever affectionately

Henry S. Pears

I have no copies of the Board's Annual Reports for '45 and '46.

Could you get these for me? I asked one of the former Secretaries

for them a long time ago but had no reply.

January 10, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Last night Connie and I read aloud your fine article on "The Present Situation" for the Decennial History of the Board. We admired very much its clarity, cogency and insight, and its truth and beauty of phrase. Connie said she thought it was wonderful and that she agreed with every word of it. I am glad to pass along this verbal bouquet to you in the snows of Connecticut.

As I read the article I felt like applauding your courage in taking on one after the other of the present foes of foreign missions just as you did your opponents in the SPAR fight on the way to Montevideo. In expert fashion, you knocked off the SMR, just as you did so in 1925; Mr. Gandhi; the Congregationalists represented by Mr. Harper; Clifford Manshardt; Dr. Hocking; the isolationists; the new deal philosophy of the State; and in taking over loads that individuals should rightfully carry; equalization of gifts without the right of designation; nationalism, and other foes.

Enclosed is a typewritten copy with the original manuscript. Perhaps you may wish to make some changes.

I read in the "Life of Balzac" that he usually rewrote his manuscripts approximately sixteen times and that after the first galley had been set. I have not read much Balzac, but what I have read made me wonder if it were worth rewriting that many times; but this product of your pen is a beautiful job, and you may not wish to make any changes.

I have three or four minor changes to suggest chiefly in insertions, and you will know best if you wish to make these changes or not.

Page 1, paragraph 2, line 2: Substitute "World War II" for "the world war."

Page 3, line 8 from the bottom, "Round Table Conference": Should not the date be inserted?

Page 5, paragraph 2, line 2: Should not the date of Manshardt's article be inserted?

I am not sure we followed your wishes in inclusion and exclusion of quotations from Manshardt's article, insertion B, as your markings were subject to various interpretations. Will you check this against the original to see if the quotations are correct?

January 10, 1947

Page 7, paragraph 2, line 4: Substitute some other word for "pitiful."

Page 10, paragraph 1, line 15, "...the dissociation of authority and responsibility": Should not this idea be developed more fully? You commented further on this point on page 11. Perhaps there should be a reference on page 10 to that further comment.

The reader of this book may not be as well acquainted with the technical problems involved of self-support, self-government, and self-propagation as the missionary staff.

Page 13, paragraph 2, line 6: Should not "Communism" be inserted after "Axis powers?" The Axis powers are finished, but the power of the Communist thought, backed by Russia, is not finished.

Page 14, second line from the end, "Dr. Adolph Keller wrote recently from Geneva": This history will appear probably toward the end of 1947 or early in 1948. Is the adverb "recently" correct, or should his statement be dated?

Page 16: Should not a reference be made to the courageous example of the men in the armed forces who have given their lives and have served their country with absolute devotion be included also?

You made a statement during the first world war which I have never forgotten:

"Every soldier who is giving up his life on the battlefield is a summons and reproach to those of us who have accepted the Christ of the cross but not the cross of Christ? If they can give so freely to their lords of Death and Destruction, why should we not give even more freely to our Lord of Life and Peace?"

I will never forget the sight of the young soldiers sailing from our Port (nearly three quarters of a million of them) bound for almost immediate combat and the mingling with the wounded and the three quarters of a million who returned; and their brave and heroic spirit left enduring memories.

You refer to the war in the first part of the article. Would it not be well to make a reference to the soldiers, together with the other examples of complete devotion which you list, such as, Mohru, Wilson, and Livingstone? The book, "Night Climb," by Frank Harper, published by Longman, Green and Company, which tells the story of the 10th Mountain Division in going over supposedly impassable Mount Maccinello to surprise and drive out the Germans, is a typical record of such courage.

The 10th Mountain Division went out from our Port under Major General George Hays, who, as you know, was a grandson of Hunter Corbett and a son of George Hays, both of our missionary force in China. I will never forget the General and the brave lads with him, and I think they and other soldiers could be bracketed with Mohru, Wilson, and Livingstone in the concluding paragraph of your article.

Dr. Robert E. Spear

- 5 -

January 10, 1947

If you will return the enclosed typewritten copy, with any changes you wish, I will do my best to see that it goes to press just as you have written it, and in any case, will send you a galley before the book is printed.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

Enclosure

P. S. I picked up in the book store downstairs a copy of "The Life Work of George Irving," edited by David Porter. I read the Foreword and the chapter by George and your chapter on "The Faith and Life Seminars." I remember well Trumbull's book on "Individual Work for Individuals," which was in use when I was a student, and George apparently carried on his service in the tradition and spirit of that book.

I was impressed by the number of seminars which you had attended (fifty in twenty-three states).

Of course, you know the train of thought which reeding this tribute to a noble Christian like George Irving starts in my mind, but I will not plague you about this further. W.R.W.

January 8, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Thank you very much for your chapter on "The Present Situation" for the Decennial History of the Missions and Board and for your accompanying letter with its incisive, discriminating, and stimulating defense of civilian over military methods.

I think your Toronto address, as edited, will fit well in the Decennial History, and I am grateful to you for taking the time to rewrite it and to send it on to us.

I am glad you made the point you did in the first part of the manuscript about the effect of winning the war upon the future of missions, and also I understand something of the experiences that you were hinting at in your final paragraphs.

I am happy that we have this product of your mind and pen, and after receiving it, I felt like saying to the Lord, "Now let Thy servant depart in peace."

I was reading last night from Frances Perkins' "The Roosevelt I Knew," and two sentences on pages 179 and 180 buttressed your comment on the military viewpoint:

"A year later Secretary Dern reported at a cabinet meeting that he thought the experience of handling the CCC had been the most valuable the Army had ever had.

"'They have had to learn,' he said, 'to govern men by leadership, explanation, and diplomacy rather than discipline. That knowledge is priceless to the American Army.'"

I still hold, however, that as civilians, we can learn something from the Army way of doing things with its discipline, decision, and dispatch; and I am happy that I had the opportunity of being of some service to my country in the Army, even though what I did was not very hazardous or notable.

We will have a copy made of your article for you so that you may correct any misinterpretation of your hieroglyphics; and if there is further editing, I will send a galley to you for your final approval.

Dr. Robert E. Speer

- 2 -

January 8, 1947

I see that despite your somewhat derogatory remarks on the Military, you have taken some truly militant positions in your chapter, and I am glad we can give them support through an official publication of the Board.

I passed on your greetings to Officer Hutchins on the corner, who asked me to send his regards to you. He said that he would be seventy next year and would retire then, but that he could still hold his own with the younger officers in directing traffic.

I am going to fly out to California on January 20 to see Sandy, who is trying to get into college there, and I wish you were going along.

Connie joins me in love to Mrs. Speer and to you.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

January 3, 1947

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Your letter, saying that you could not send in a statement for the Decennial History of the Board by January 1, 1947, has come.

I cannot reconcile myself to the omission of your contribution to the book, and I will keep a place for whatever you may decide to write, until April 1, 1947. We are hoping to go to press May 1, 1947, but that is a hope rather than a fixed deadline.

It is interesting to compare the methods of securing material for a history like this -- those used in the army and in civilian life. At the Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation, I had much the same job of corraling articles for the two-volume history of the Port. I was interested to see how the system worked in the army. After approval of securing the material and publishing the history had been given, an order went out from the Commanding General to the officers who had been selected to write certain chapters of the History: a deadline was given for receiving the material, and the officers understood that if any of them were delinquent when the deadline came, they would be subject to a "gig" (reprimand) from the Commanding General, which would be in their record. Accordingly, every officer came through right on time, and it was an easy matter for the historian to go ahead with the editing of the material.

I know that we are working in civilian circles and in accordance with the democratic system, but sometimes you long for a little more of the military discipline and obedience to orders that are present in army service but too often seem absent in civilian work. I think we ought to be as energetic and efficient in the work of the Army of the Lord as in the service of the Army of the United States, but there are real difficulties in achieving this object. (As a civilian, I am not without fault!)

You defined the military virtues in one of your books as discipline and austerity, and I think we need more of both in our civilian life. You also said once that the two greatest qualities in missionary service were love and patience, and I am trying to reconcile the two viewpoints in the work now before us.

You made a beautiful statement, although hampered by time limitation, when you spoke in tribute to John R. Mott at the dinner on December 19, 1945. You spoke of the Pauline conception of one world and how the modern world is just catching up with that conception, which was expressed over 1,900 years ago by St. Paul, and before him, by the Lord Himself.

January 3, 1947

I wish you could develop that theme in your article for the History, outlined with something of the significance of the decade 1936-1946 against the world situation, and against your experience of forty-six years here at 156.

You served during two wars (the Spanish-American and World War I), and this decade includes World War II, and I am sure your eloquent pen can produce a valuable chapter for the History, and I cannot be reconciled to its omission. Won't you consider it and send in whatever comes to you before April 1, 1947? Make it as long or as short as you wish, and we will take anything you will write.

Your service and that of Dr. John Lowrie cover most of the Board's first century of service, and we need the historical background and viewpoint that only you can supply.

Miss Daisy Atterbury, a niece of Walter Lowrie, had luncheon with Connie and me yesterday. She had been working on a biography of her uncle but had to leave the manuscript in a small trunk at the internment camp in Weinsien. I hope so much that it can be recovered and that the book will come out in due time. I am grateful for the privilege of having known Dr. Lowrie, and if Daisy cannot complete that book, I would certainly love to tackle it.

Last week I was reading the manuscript for the biography of Dr. Harry Luce, written by Dr. Garside, which he asked me to read and comment upon. Revell will publish it. I am glad that this record of Dr. Luce's able and fruitful life will be made available for the Church and for his friends. It will be called "One Increasing Purpose."

Dr. Mott is writing, as you know, a six-volume history of the organizations he served, which, in a sense, will be autobiographical.

I cannot get away from the conviction that there should be a biography or autobiography that will sum up your service. Have you read Thomas Lanont's "My Boyhood in a Parsonage?" You were a contemporary and neighbor of his, and when I read that volume I wished so much that we could have a somewhat similar summary of reminiscences out of your own home and life. I am not going to keep on bothering you about this, but the hope is still there, even though it is playing its theme on only one string.

I was sorry I could not have the privilege of hearing you when you led in the devotional talks at the Executive Council Retreat last month. Mr. Steele told me with much appreciation of the beautiful way you led those devotionals and said, "There is no one like Dr. Speer." I wish I could have been with you, but I am not a member of the Executive Council and so could not be included.

Connie joins me in love to Mrs. Speer and to you.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

December 20, 1946

Dr. Robert E. Speer
c/o Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer
33 Fifth Avenue
New York 3, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Last night I heard the tributes paid to Dr. Mott and your beautiful statement which, despite the hampering time limit, summed up so completely the message of Dr. Mott's life and work.

I am very grateful to him and to you for your wonderful Christian influence and leadership. I remember well when I attended the Nashville Student Volunteer Convention in 1906, when I first heard Dr. Mott, and it was always such an inspiration and help to see you both and listen to you at the student conferences and at other gatherings.

It was fine to see the spontaneous tribute paid to you last night when the whole audience rose when you began your brief address.

I told the staff at the daily prayer meeting today about the dinner and about your talk, and that of Dr. Mott, and we prayed for both of you; that you would have a special measure of Christmas joy and many years of service still to come.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

Copy for Mr. S. F. Mack
Dr. C. T. Lehart
Dr. Schell

C
O
P
Y

ROCKLEDGE

LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Dec. 11, '46

My dear Rex,

It was good to see you and all the friends at the luncheon on Dr. Brown's birthday, and it is good to have your letter with the account of Admiral Halsey's talk. I don't think our admirals have shone greatly in their utterances. One of them, you remember, declared before Pearl Harbor that if we went to war with Japan, we would blow the Japanese Navy out of the Pacific in two weeks. Two hours sufficed for the Japanese to blow us out.

I remember your request for a chapter for your history, but I have been unable to find anything to say that would not be obviously only carpenter's work, and that would not be worth while.

Ever affectionately

Robert E. Speer

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Dec. 11, 46

Let's
mark -
Schell

My dear Rex.

It was good to see you and all the friends at the luncheon
on Dr. Brown's birth day. and it is good to have your letter with
the account of Admiral Stalsey's talk. I don't think our admirals
have shone greatly in their utterances. One of them, I remember,
declared before Pearl Harbor that if we went to war with Japan
we could blow the Japs out of the Pacific in two weeks.
Two hours sufficed for the Japs to blow us out.

I remember your request for a chapter for your history but
I have been unable to find anything to say that would not be obviously
only carpenter's work. and that would not be worth while

Ever affectionately

Robert F. Jones

December 6, 1946

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

It was splendid to see and to hear you at the luncheon on Dr. Brown's birthday, and I have heard many an appreciative comment on the wit, wisdom, and love of your winged words on that occasion. It was like old times to have two of the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" present, and so many of the Alumni of the Staff. I shall always be glad and grateful that for a number of years I could sit at the feet, in the work here, of two of such really great men in the service of our Church as you and Dr. Brown. We shall not see their like again.

As you were reminiscing, I thought of a talk I heard Admiral Halsey give at the Yale Club the other evening. His stories were not quotable without expurgation at least outside of the Navy and Army circles. He was speaking off the record at the Yale Club, but I jotted down some notes, and I thought you might be interested in them. You need not bother to return the enclosed memorandum, and, of course, his words are not quotable or for publication. I enjoyed hearing him, however, and I believe he is truly in the tradition of our great fighters and admirals.

I called on Mike Sweeney last Sunday, and I saw on his table your book, "Jesus and Our Human Problems," in which you had quoted from Mike's autobiography his statement on prayer. Mike is seventy-four and a bit shaky but still retains much of his former warmth, keenness, and charm.

On July 13, 1946 I wrote asking if we could have a statement from you which could be a chapter in the Decennial History of the Missions and Board, on which I am working. You replied you would keep the matter in mind, and I am writing now to express the hope that we can have this contribution to the History from you. I am trying to secure the material by January 1, 1947.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

Enclosure

Mrs. Robert E. Spear

"ROCKLEDGE," LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Recd. 13 Nov. 46

Copy sent to Brig. Gen'l Kilpatrick on

November 14, 1946.

Dear Gen'l

Yours two big imposing
 letters arrived to-day, but
 alas, my travelling power
 is held up - grounded, apparently
 in Omaha - I will not get home
 today, possibly not even tomorrow!
 Going west his train was too
 heavy late - so, "East, West, Home"
 but I'll try to keep him here.
 Your books will go in a place of honor on
 one shelf of war books & histories.

Mary, Mary, Mary
 Nov. 9 1946
 (Mrs. R. E. Spear)



The Rev. W. Reginald Wheeler

156 Fifth Ave.

New York 10 -
N. Y.

File 100-100000
Extract from letter: (Sent to Brig. Gen. J. R. Kilpatrick, November 14, 1946)

ROCKLEDGE

LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Nov. 12, 1946

The Rev. W. Reginald Wheeler, D.D.
156 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, N. Y.

Dear Rex:

On reaching home I found the two volumes of your
Norfolk History. I have already been looking them over with
great interest and am glad that you are able to do so good a
job.

Ever affectionately yours,

(Signed) Robert E. Speer

Return to W.R. Wheeler

Rm 434,
156 Fifth Avenue

(This letter sent around to Officers of the Board, Nov. 26, 1946)

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

Nov. 12, 1946

Dr. Spear

W.R.W.

NOV 14 1946

The Rev. W. Reginald Wheeler, D.D.
156 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, N. Y.

Dear Rex:

I am just back from a three weeks' trip attending Faith and Light Seminars in Missouri and Indiana and the Eleventh Annual Inter-denominational Conference of Evangelical Ministers in Berkeley, Calif. This conference was initiated by Dr. Downs and this is the third time that I have gone out for its meetings. It was a rather unpleasant trip both ways, due to delays. I went out on the Overland Limited from Chicago and our car was disabled, happily avoiding a wreck, and we got to Berkeley ten hours late. I came home by plane on the plane scheduled to leave San Francisco at six o'clock in the evening and to arrive in New York the next morning at 9:25, stopping only at Omaha, where we were held up by some mechanical trouble in the plane and as a result reached New York eleven hours late. We flew from Omaha straight to New York, however, in a little over five hours.

On reaching home I found your good letters of October 28th and November 8th, and also the two volumes of your Norfolk History. I have already been looking them over with great interest and am glad that you are able to do so good a job.

Your list of books shows that you have read a great many that I've not read. I am glad to know about General Dobbie's book which I must try to get.

It is good to hear about Pete and Sandy and know that you are making headway on your Decennial History of the Board. I don't know what contribution I could make to it but I shall be glad to keep the matter in mind.

Don't fail to remember me to Officer Hutchins when you see him.

I hope to come down for the staff Retreat in December and shall look forward to seeing you then. With much love to Connie,

Ever affectionately yours,

Robert Spear

D. Wheeler

November 8, 1943

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

Today I saw Officer Hutchins on the corner of Twenty-third Street and Fifth Avenue and gave him your message of remembrance contained in your recent letter. He was much pleased to hear from you.

He said he had been on his present assignment (Fifth Avenue and Twenty-third Street and nearby) for nearly forty years and that he knew you well and used your book, "Five Minutes a Day" and had read other writings of yours.

I hope you will come down soon to see him and your other non-police friends here at 153.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

WRW/ed

THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

MEMORANDUM November 6, 1946 (dict Nov. 2)

FROM

J. L. Dodds

TO

W. R. Wheeler

Dr. Speer

Dear Rex:

Thanks for sending along the copy of Dr. Speer's letter. You may not have known that he has been invited to lead the devotionals at our next staff conference meeting. It will be grand to see him and hear him again.

JLD/ds

Cordially yours,

JLD

October 23, 1946

Dr. Richard E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Speer:

The other day I had to make out a list of books read in the last year. Of course, I thought of you with your prodigious consumption.

I am enclosing my list, which I thought might be of some interest to you, though, doubtless, it cannot compare with your longer total. This list is rather heavily weighted toward the military, but you will understand such reading was necessary in the job I had, and I will try to redress the balance now; but I am glad that I had the opportunity of reading the fine books on Lee and Lee's Lieutenants and on Stonewall Jackson.

I have been reading "Great Teachers" by Houston Peterson and was impressed by a paragraph in the introductory statement on the effective teachers in American schools and colleges to be found in the gymnasium and on the athletic fields. I am sending a copy of that paragraph to Mike Sweeney, whom I hope to see in the near future. I am also sending a copy of Mike's autobiography to the editor, Mr. Peterson, whose book includes only individuals who are not now living; otherwise, Mike should certainly be included as an illustration of the type of teacher described in the enclosed paragraph.

I am enclosing also a copy of Dr. Brown's Preface to the Decennial History of the Board on which I am working. I am hoping very much that you will write a chapter for the book. In an earlier letter you said you would keep the matter in mind and would see what develops. Any time up to January 1, 1947 would be all right.

John Mackay gave a wonderful address at the Board dinner recently after his return from Latin America and really cut loose on the wave of his great and obvious love for that field. I wish you could have been present and hope you will come to speak at some staff meeting soon.

Our youngest son, Pete, has returned from the Pacific, where he was in the 97th Infantry Division and in the 11th Airborne Division as a paratrooper. He has been accepted for entrance at Yale in February.

Dr. Richard E. Speer

- 2 -

October 28, 1945

Sandy is on his way to California, where he is trying to enter one of the colleges. He enjoyed having luncheon with Carolyn here before she went overseas.

My love and best wishes to Mrs. Speer.

Affectionately yours,

W. Reginald Wheeler

RR/ed

Enclosures

P. S. When Connie and I returned from China in 1933 I was startled and depressed by the extraordinary taste exhibited in the women's hats. I wondered what could have twisted their sense of beauty to produce such monstrosities and to be willing to pay for them.

Most of the books on my reading list are non-fiction. I wanted to include some fiction and chose rather at random four or five novels that were at the top of the best seller lists given in the New York Times and New York Herald Tribune. I think the taste in fiction is about on a par with the former taste in feminine hats.

The best novel that I have read is by Ullman, "The White Tower," which I have listed under General books, but it is good chiefly because it is about the mountains, and that is a manly, clean subject that even present taste in fiction cannot deface.

Have you read Lieutenant General Debbie's book, "A Very Present Help?" I think you and William would enjoy "Mr. Roberts."

I hope we can see you when you are next in New York. W.R.W.

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT

August 28, 1946

Rex
30 Aug. 46

Rev. W. Reginald Wheeler
114 East 84th Street
New York City 28

My dear Rex:

Your note of August 16th came just as I was leaving for Bible Conferences in the South immediately after the service in the First Church Sunday a week ago. I returned last evening and am now trying to catch up on arrears.

Thank you very much for the clipping from The Journal American. I had already seen reviews of Wilson's book which is evidently the product of the kind of a mind that could speak as he spoke about Mrs. John and Lyman Abbott in his Atlantic article.

I trust that you and Connie had some real rest this summer. I can't tell you how good it was to see you both at the services at the First Church.

While in Montreat I heard of David McConaughy's death. He had grown quite feeble and slipped away in his sleep-- a good way to go.

Ever affectionately yours,

Robert E. Spencer

Rockledge
Lakeville, Connecticut

August 28, 1946

Rev. W. Reginald Wheeler
114 East 84th Street
New York City 28

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Ever affectionately yours,

Robert Speer (signed)

4 copies

Ref - 31, 46

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE CONNECTICUT

July 30. 46

My dear Rex

I had heard of your return to the Board
and am glad to have your letter about the work
you are to do. I can't make any promise to
provide a chapter such as you suggest but
will keep the matter in mind and see if any
thing develops. "

Let us all work and happy be. Warren
and Beulah Leggett and Nancy Cochran and
another young lady friend are here. and the place
has a heavenly beauty and peace.

Billy is in charge of admissions in

Rudgers temerity and has just succeeded in
getting a house for his family. All is well with
Stanley and Patty and their families. So we are
very grateful for all of God's goodness.

With tender love to Emma

Ever affectionately

Robert Rogers

ROCKLEDGE

LAKEVILLE CONNECTICUT

July 30, 1946

My dear Rex:

I had heard of your return to the Board and am glad to have your letter about the work you are to do. I can't make any promise to provide a chapter such as you suggest but will keep the matter in mind and see if anything develops.

Robert E. Speer (signed)

August 8, 1946

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Speer:

It was splendid to see you and to hear you last Sunday in the First Presbyterian Church in this city, and your parishioners in the front pew. Connie, Sister Ann and I enjoyed deeply the whole service. The years which have passed have increased rather than impaired the integrity, vitality and eloquence of your presentation of the gospel: in the original meaning of the Greek you were a true prophet, one who spoke for God; and we all came away strengthened for the battles of life before us.

I have been reading with keen interest your last book "Jesus and Our Human Problems", and I was interested to see that you had quoted in full Mike Sweeney's references to prayer that appeared in his autobiography. I called up Mike and told him about your quoting his words in your last book and he was very pleased. Will Barbour and I sent him a copy of the book.

I thought the last chapters of your book were especially moving and helpful and I had the feeling that your own bereavement helped you in the phrasing and writing of these chapters; thus you comforted others with the comfort wherewith you were comforted of God.

I wonder what you thought of the book by W. O. Stevens which I sent to you. Mr. Stevens was at Nantucket last month when we were there and we had an interesting evening with him. He spoke on the subject of his book one night in the National Arts Club in New York and he told me of some very interesting incidents that were described to him on the same theme by others who heard him speak and by those who have read his book. I do not believe in table-tipping or Ouija boards but I do believe that those in the other world are much nearer to us than we in this world perceive. A number of times I have had the feeling of the nearness of loved ones like my father, mother, twin brother and two sons who have gone into the other world. I had to go to the army hospital at Fort Monroe in February and March with tonsillitis and a fever that stayed around more than a month. We had worked very hard on the History of the Port which came out last week from the Yale University Press, and I was really tired. They gave me sulpha and penicillin and I felt miserable. I couldn't eat because of the tonsillitis. One night I felt so low I really wanted to move on into the other world. I thought I could see almost as clearly as on this earth my father, mother and Fraul (the children's nurse and house keeper who was with us for fifty-five years and was like a second mother to us boys) my twin brother and my two sons. They seemed as if they were standing against the bar of heaven looking at me with love, sympathy and encouragement. I really wanted to go and

be with them although I knew that I had a duty here to Connie and my two sons on this side. The dream or vision or what ever you may call it was vivid and real as long as it lasted and I can't help believing that our loved ones do come close to us in time of need, and it was a comfort to have that experience.

There seems to be a number of instances that were authentic where individuals have appeared to loved ones at or near the time of their death. I have three friends who have described most vivid and life-like appearances of this type. This I believe is the basis for most of the ghost stories. There are also apparently instances where those who have died returned afterwards as messengers or to visit their haunts on earth. You spoke of Christ's Transfiguration and speaking to Moses and Elias and that would be such a type of re-appearance. There are also in the Bible, as you know, a number of instances of angels being messengers. The instance in Stevens book recounted by Dr. S. Weir Mitchell about the little girl who brought to him a request for attendance on her mother who was very ill, was such an instance. Dr. Mitchell would not invent or prevaricate such a tale.

✓ The instances described by Nathaniel Hawthorne of the old gentleman Dr. Harris who appeared after his death was another interesting instance from the pen of a reputable author and there are others throughout the book. Mr. Stevens himself lost a son in the war and has written a moving little volume called "Beyond the Sunset". He holds the Christian conviction about the Resurrection and reunion in the other world. I would like to know what you thought of the book and if you were interested in it.

I am going to preach in Nantucket on Sunday August 18th and will see Mr. Stevens again at that time.

I am slogging away at the Decennial History of the Board. The decade under review is an interesting one and I hope I can do justice to it and to the honored men and women who served during it.

• Andy Roy, one of the young missionaries at Hanking, has come into the offices to fill in in the absence of Pete Wysham on deputation and it is nice to have him here. He comes from Pittsburgh and married one of the Crutchfield girls of Sewickley.

With love to all of your family, I am

Affectionately yours

WRW:DA

W. Reginald Wheeler

Special gift

July 19, 1946

Dr. Robert Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Speer:

As you can see by the stationery, I am back in the Board offices where I began work again, July 8th, 1946. I am not in the Division where I worked formerly but have been asked to write a Decennial history of the Board and the Missions as a supplement to the Magnum Opus that Dr. Brown produced on the first century of the Board work. I will be glad to tackle this though I am sure Dr. Brown or you could do a much better job. I have written Dr. Brown asking him if he would write a Preface for the book and I presume we will have the Forward from Dr. Mackay as president of the Board. I would like very much to have a chapter by you which could take any form that you wish.

The Board has given me a year for this work and I am collecting materials on it. The story will include events from October 15, 1935 to October 15, 1945 and will include annual reports dating from April 1, 1936 to April 1, 1946, ten years, covering the period of the war in China, and World War II and in general will cover the decade following your severance from the service here. You will doubtless wish to look over the material when it begins to shape up.

I would like to put in this summer and fall collecting the data and then in the first three months of 1947, in writing up the history. This would mean we would like to have your chapter sometime after the first of the year. Make it as long or short as you wish and you can cover any aspect of the service you prefer.

The transition from army life to civilian life is almost as radical as the original change from civilian to army life. The two worlds are quite distinct and the transfer is not an easy one in either direction. I am glad to be back, however, after three years and six months in the army service and will do my best with the work that has been given to me. The appointment is for only one year.

I hope that you have good word from your daughter/^{overseas} and that Billy and Marnie and Mrs. Speer are all well.

My love and best wishes to all of you.

Affectionately yours

WRW:DA

W. Reginald Wheeler



ALBERT S. FOX
MANAGER

Pub 16 Nov. '45
Ans 2 Dec. '45

The Belvedere

CHARLES STREET AT CHASE

Baltimore

Nov. 14. '45

My dear Rex,

A note from Bill Schell tells me of
the great sorrow and loss that has come to
you and Connie in Rex Junior's going. and I
want at once to send you both deepest love and
sympathy from Mrs. Spear and me and from Billy
who is here in Baltimore at present in the
office of the Post Director. We know well just what
this sorrow means to you both & mystery of it
is beyond our understanding. We can only be
gentle and trusting and lean on the Everlasting Love
and God's wise purpose. May He bless and keep

and comfort you.

I hope you will be finishing your army
course soon. Billy hopes to be out of the Navy
in a few weeks and thinks of going back to
educational work again.

I am here for a week of services in the
2^d Presbyterian Church and hope to go home to
Lakewood on Saturday.

Ever affectionately

Robert Spear.

Recd. - 10 Feb. '45

ROCKLEDGE
LAKEVILLE CONNECTICUT

Feb. 7. '45

Dear Rex,

I was glad to get yesterday your
Feb. 2 letter. And I is glad to be home to get
letters here. We came back Saturday, Jan. 27.
just three weeks less two days after the opera-
tion which the doctors said was a star re-
covery. The wound is all healed now and I per-
form as a natural mortal. and used only time
and gradual exercise to get my strength back.
I have called off all appointments until April
and am having a great time here reading
and resting.

It is always good to hear from you and I
hope it may not be long now before you are
back on the missionary job again.

I have ^{read} 35 books since Christmas - and only
one detective story among them - no less. I read a
big biography of Andrew Johnson which gets set him
up in my esteem. And an autobiography of Coolidge
the bridge expert, which set him down deep.

Ever affectionately

Robert E. Green

WAR DEPARTMENT
HAMPTON ROADS PORT OF EMBARKATION
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

16 October 1944

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Speer:

Last week I wrote you, but I want to add a note to that letter today.

Last night I had dinner at a Hampton Institute home at which a Miss Blanche M. Speer was present. Miss Speer is a member of the faculty at Hampton Institute, but is expecting to leave for another appointment this week. She has been here for about a year. She is the daughter of Erastus A. Speer, of Easton, Pennsylvania, a lumberman of your generation, a former managing partner of the Fitzgerald-Speer Company and of the Speer Lumber Company. He was also responsible for a suburban development near Easton called "Speertown". He has been active in church work, and an Elder in the Lehigh Presbytery for nearly 50 years, an Elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Penn Argyll and of the College Hill Presbyterian Church. He conducted a Bible Class known as the E. A. Speer Bible Class. He died about two years ago, age 76.

His daughter showed me a message to her that she found among his papers after his death, which read as follows:

"Dear Daughter,

"It can't be so long now until I join Mother. Three score and ten years are all we are promised and I used up my allowance some years ago.

"With Jacob of old, I can say: 'I have waited for Thy salvation, O Lord,' and with David, I surely can say, 'I had fainted unless I had believed to see the greatness of the Lord, in the land of the living,' and to you, my daughter, I can truthfully say: 'Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.'

FOR DEFENSE



BUY
UNITED
STATES
SAVINGS
BONDS
AND STAMPS

"Yes, our plans might have given us more freedom in many ways, but it was willed differently and we still may have grace to say: 'Not my will, but Thine, be done.' We know that all things work together for good, even though we are undeserving. I know I can leave you in the

16 October 1944

care of One who is better able than I.

"Your loving Dad."

I believe that Mr. Speer, like a number of other lumbermen, suffered during the depression and was not able to leave his daughter much in the world's goods, but he did leave her a wonderful memory of a noble Christian and an enduring love in Christ.

I spoke yesterday in a Methodist Church in Hampton. I spoke on "Foreign Missions in War Time". There were a number of service men, officers and enlisted men, from nearby posts, including Fort Monroe and Langley Field.

I have spoken almost every Sunday during recent weeks and have enjoyed the change from the routine work of the Port. I am not a member of the Chaplain's Corps, although I tried hard to get in. I remember once that you said you were sort of a guerilla preacher and I have felt as if I belonged in somewhat the same category, although not as eloquent a one as you.

Sincerely yours,

W. R. Wheeler
Major, T. C.
Port Historian

WAR DEPARTMENT
HAMPTON ROADS PORT OF EMBARKATION
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

29 January 1944

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

Dr. Robert E. Spear^E
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Spear:

The beautiful little book "Five Minutes a Day" came last week and I appreciate very much your thoughtfulness in sending me a copy and particularly one with a personal inscription. I will treasure the book and words from your own pen.

I remember your speaking of making such a collection for your own personal use and I am very glad that this has now been made available for others. A number of the poems and quotations in prose are familiar and I am happy to have them. I remember those that you quoted on various occasions in addresses and in your books and articles and the memorial minutes you wrote for the board and it is fine to have them gathered together now in a single volume.

The lovely verse by Christina Rossetti on page 31, on the page with the heading "The Children in Heaven" I did not know before and I am grateful for it and for the beautiful prayer on the same page. I am glad too that you included some of your own prayers which will carry a message to those who read the book. I am ordering a copy of the book for Connie, who is in New York, and have already spoken of it to a number of friends here. I hope the book will be widely used and will be truly blessed.

The word in the press concerning the treatment of captured American soldiers by the Japanese after the surrender in the Philippines is not surprising to those who have been in touch with the developments in the Far East and who know what happened after the capture of Nanking. It was fear of some such development that led me to argue as strongly as I could when I was in the Executive Council against the board sending word to the field which would be interpreted as instructions to stay on, particularly by the women members of the missions. I had a clear vision that some such measures of terror and torture would be visited upon American prisoners in Japanese hands and I could not believe it was right to take the responsibility of instructing missionaries, particularly women, to place themselves in the power of the Japanese army. We thank God that the first two groups of missionaries have come out safely on the Gripsholm and that Margaret is safe at home

FOR DEFENSE



BUY
UNITED
STATES
SAVINGS
BONDS
AND STAMPS

29 January 1944

with you now. We will pray earnestly that the other missionaries and other Americans will escape the fate of the American soldiers described in recent news dispatches. The Japanese military machine is absolutely without mercy, implacable, and ruthless and that fact must be thoroughly understood as we go forward in this war that must be carried through until the issue is finally settled and the power of that machine is broken forever. I wish so much I could be assigned to the Far East and I have been trying to secure such an assignment but that may not be possible, but that is where I would like most to be and I am going to continue to strive toward that end.

If Billy is anywhere in this section of the world, please let me know or tell him to get in touch with me anyhow. I can be reached through the Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation, telephone Newport News 71281, Extension 103 and I would love dearly to see him if he happens to be in Norfolk or at Little Creek.

With love to you and Mrs. Spear, I am

Affectionately yours,

WILLIAM R. WHEELER
Captain, T. C.
Port Historian

11 December 1943

Dr. Robert E. Speer
Rockledge
Lakeville, Conn.

Dear Dr. Speer:

When September 10 came around I had the impulse to send a birthday message or a birthday telegram. The routine of the Army prevented the former and the present wartime regulations made impossible the latter. I did send mentally, however, a message of love and remembrance and I want now to write to forward to you and Mrs. Speer this statement of my thought and love.

I wish very much I could have been in New York when the Gripsholm came in. I wrote to Margaret, addressing it to the steamer and I can imagine the joy with which you welcomed her back into the family circle again. She has been a true soldier and you certainly have the right to be proud of her. Please give her my love and greetings.

We were made happy by three letters received from Sandy recently. I thought you might be interested in them and I am inclosing some extracts herewith. I was interested to see that his hunting experiences in the hills of Pennsylvania were bearing fruit on the Mess tables of the RCAF in England. Sandy was a pole vaulter at the Hill and has always been interested in acrobatics. He thought once of joining the paratroopers. His athletics have been a real help to him in aerobatics and I can see that he had some real admiration and perhaps some envy for his Belgian room mate who had performed on the "flying trapeze".

I wish you could wedge in a speaking engagement down in this section of the country and we could have the pleasure of seeing you here.

If Billy should come back into port in this area, I hope you will surely let us know.

I hope to have a week's leave some time within the next month and will look forward to being home then. Connie enjoyed a brief conversation with Mrs. Speer recently. We have kept our

11 Dec 43

apartment in New York as a base and home for the boys.

With Christmas love to you and Mrs. Speer and to all your family, I am

Affectionately yours,

3 Incls.

C O P Y

WICKLIDGE
MANSFIELDVILLE, CONNECTICUT

August 9, '40

My Dear Rex:

Mrs. Speer and I are glad to hear the news of Andy and can sympathize with you and Connie in his going. Billy left with his gun crew a fortnight ago. We have no knowledge of course as to his whereabouts.

Margaret is at Wei Hsien (?) and the Gripsholm is still in the Hudson River. I see it when I go up and down the New York Central.

I am speaking Sundays in the First Church except Sunday the 22nd when I am at the Montreat Conference in North Carolina.

You may not have heard of George Irving's death -- suddenly of heart trouble at his summer place in Canada. I shall miss him sorely as I have been with him at 50 of these Faith and Life Seminars. I don't know whether this work will be continued.

Ever affectionately,

/s/ Robert E. Speer

C O P Y

0672
ROBERT E. SPEER
NEWVILLE, CONNECTICUT

August 9, 1940

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/s/ Robert E. Speer

COPY